

REMARKS

Claim 1 has been amended so that the formers are limited to being ceramic or porcelain. Support for the amendment to claim 1 can be found on page 4, paragraph 16 and in the Examples.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-10 under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Kitahara (US 6,615,852).

Applicants respectfully traverse. Applicant's invention is directed towards the removal of coagulant residue from ceramic and/or porcelain formers through the use of a first bath comprising an aqueous solution comprising ethylene diaminetetraacetate (EDTA), followed by the use of a second bath comprising an aqueous solution comprising EDTA and/or detergent and/or base. The removal of coagulants from ceramic and/or porcelain formers, prior to applicant's invention, involved the use of hostile materials and methods, such as hot acid baths and brushing. The cleaning system of the present invention offers a surprising alternative to the prior art in that it needs only for the formers to be immersed in baths of aqueous solution for removal of coagulant residues to occur.

Kitahara does not teach that systems involving baths of aqueous solutions of applicant's invention may on their own be used to remove coagulant residue from ceramic and/or porcelain formers. Kitahara discloses a multi component process that is concerned with the use of cleaning machines for the cleaning of conductive (e.g. metallic) dies used for synthetic resin molds. Kitahara's invention comprises a degreasing system, an electrolytic cleaning system, an electrolyte circulator system and an ultrasonic transducer for agitation. Additionally, Kitahara relies on the use of electrodes, and associated power source, to enable the agitated electrolytic-cleaning liquid (comprising EDTA etc.) to cause electrolytic cleaning of the dies. Kitahara recites, column 6, lines 26 to 34, that if too little voltage is used in the cleaning process alkali burning occurs and if too high a voltage is used cleaning is not effective. Kitahara does not disclose or suggest that the aqueous solutions of the present invention may be used in the absence of other materials and methods, such as electrolytic cleaning and agitation and abrasion, to effectively clean residues from formers.

Kitahara is directed to electrolytic cleaning of dies, particularly metallic dies. Applicant's invention is a non-abrasive, non-electrolytic system, for the cleaning of

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ceramic or porcelain (i.e. non-conductive) formers. Applicant's claims as now amended are not anticipated by Kitahara and applicants respectfully request the Examiner to remove the rejection on these grounds.

In view of the above, reconsideration and withdrawal of the 102(e) rejection is earnestly solicited.

If the Examiner believes that any additional matters can be handled expeditiously by telephone conference, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned attorney.

End of Remarks

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